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Towards an Evolving Critical
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The Physical Pedagogic Bricolage

by

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Towards an Evolving Critical Consciousness in Coaching Research: The Physical Pedagogic Bricolage

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ABSTRACT

Within this paper we argue that the ontological core of sports coaching is fragile, somewhat narrow and blinkered, and acts to constrict that which counts as knowledge within the field. Through contextualising the field within a corporatised university system that favours instrumentalised forms of knowledge, we challenge the mythopoeic status afforded to the terminology 'sport' and 'coaching', instead proposing the moniker Physical Pedagogic Bricolage (PPB) to better encapsulate a reconceptualised field. Through opening the field to the deep interdisciplinarity of bricolage, we sketch a more democratic field that promotes understanding, communication, and, creates structures that allow for a better informed, more rigorous, mode of knowledge production which has the power to move the field of sports coaching in a more progressive direction. This is a project that connects coaching to a broader notion of cultural politics designed to further a multiracial, economic and political democracy, a project that connects theory to social change, textual analysis to practical politics, and academic inquiry to public spheres [1]. Of course, we fully recognise that such a challenge to the ontological core of the field will be contested. As such, we intend this paper less as a prescription for coaching research and more of a directional purview that invites—expects—critical dialogue, response and debate as we work towards a set of perhaps competing knowledges, epistemologies, and, axiological approaches that together can 'do coaching justice.'

Key words: Bricolage, Ontology, Pedagogy, Social Justice, Sports Coaching

INTRODUCTION

Within this article, we argue that what currently 'counts' as sports coaching research "needs to extend its physical and intellectual boundaries" [2, p. 34] beyond the erroneous and unsubstantiated neoliberal supposition that success in sport, and the winning of medals,

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translates into lifelong mass participation. This has resulted in the field of sports coaching being framed by a reductionist 'elite' performance agenda. Through articulating our position, we aim to provoke readers to seriously consider the hegemony of technocratic discourse within the field of study. Invoking Cushion et al. [3], we explain that sports coaching research not only lacks a sound conceptual base, but, that the fragile ontological core of 'sports coaching' is somewhat narrow and blinkered, acting to constrict that which counts as knowledge within the field. Thus, we challenge the mythopoeic status afforded to the terminology 'sport' and 'coaching', instead proposing the moniker Physical Pedagogic Bricolage (PPB) better serves a reconceptualised field. To construct our argument, we begin by contextualising the current 'moment' in which sports coaching research is undertaken prior to offering a directional purview of the ontological boundaries – the conceptual base – of a reconceptualised field of sports coaching research. We do not aim to be prescriptive here, for while some scholars may read such assertions as progressive, others will likely experience discomfort, frustration, and even anger at the new discourse [4]. We are mindful that some may view this paper as part of a 'radical discourse' that seeks to criticize the dominance of particular ways of knowing in the field of sports coaching research. Indeed, there are those who are opposed to a critical tradition in the field and "view conflict and criticism as *always* destructive, *intensely* personal, *rarely* objective, and *never* constructive" [5, p. 2; italics added]. However, we have attempted to write this paper in a responsible way, avoiding what O'Sullivan et al. [4] would describe as subjective arguments, erroneous assertions, destructive analogies, vitriolic language, and the pretence that in some way we hold the high moral ground. As such, we hope to engender debate, thinking more of the progressive potential of fluid and emergent 'field in tension', a set of debates that result in the evolution of a socially and culturally responsive, communitarian, justice-oriented agenda; in essence, a democratised approach that can 'do coaching justice'.

'SPORT COACHING RESEARCH' IN CONTEXT

HIGHER EDUCATION

As this article will be discussing sports coaching research from within a university context, it is important to understand how the university, as a social institution, is arguably more intransigent, and less dynamic in its ability to change than some others, but it is nonetheless an institution that is dialectically linked to the broader forces (political, economic, social, cultural, and technological) and context in which it is located. As such, any type of knowledge generation and dissemination takes place within the context of larger social forces. Consequently, academic researchers – be they science or humanities based – are unavoidably located within, and enabled/constrained by, contingent socio-historic norms of academic thought and inquiry. Research is thus framed within an accelerated rationalisation of society associated with the advent of late capitalism, the implicit and explicit privileging of centrally controlled, efficiency oriented, rationally predictable, and empirically calculable ways of knowing, and of knowledge generation [6]. In this regard, Giroux [7] proposes higher education is increasingly being redefined in market terms as corporate culture subsumes democratic culture, and, critical learning is replaced by an instrumental logic that celebrates the imperatives of the bottom line, downsizing, and outsourcing. In this formulation, academics become obsessed with grant writing, fund raising, 'evidence-based' research [8-11], the neoliberal policy agenda—so clearly manifested in sport policy initiatives [12]—and, capital improvements. In essence, higher education increasingly devalues its role as a democratic public sphere committed to the broader values of an engaged and critical citizenry [7]. Such instrumentalised knowledge is declared *a priori*

superior and undermines forms of theorising and pedagogy. As such, dominant pedagogic practices within the corporate university become reduced to the status of training future students for the – corporatised, and increasingly militarised – workplace. Furthermore, any knowledge that might challenge anti-democratic forms of power or that questions dominant social practices, values, power relations, and, morals, is dismissed by administrators, students, and their parents, as *irrelevant* to gaining a foothold in the job market [7].

It is within this context that academics have seen their sports coaching research guided by the controlling yardstick of profit, their knowledge instrumentalised, and responsibility diverted from broader public good towards narrow specialities [13, 14]. However, we argue that the context within which academics undertake scholarly activity in the field of sports coaching could be one in which the universities encourage creative effort and the formation of multidisciplinary groupings, which would result in inventive problem nets, research programmes and ideas [15]; in other words, an environment conducive for investigation in a reconceptualised field. Thus, and although knowledge has been instrumentalised and academics' work hyper-professionalised [13, 16], this context does afford possibilities of new networks for socially productive purposes and a diversification of higher education knowledges [16-18]. We thus see the corporatisation of the higher education system as an *opportunity* for scholars to mobilise a critical pedagogy to empower the powerless and to transform social inequalities and injustices within (and perhaps against) the context of neoliberal influences [15, 19].

THE 'PERFORMANCE' AGENDA

This rationalised, corporatised and evidence-based context has, at best, left the field of sports coaching research as a 'theme field' as opposed to a theory field [20]; and, at worst, as nothing more than a handmaiden to the high-performance, neoliberal policy agendas of our present geo-political regime (see Green [12]). Such context influences the status of sports coaching within the university, the academic department, and indeed, in public perception. This is manifest in the field in many ways. Hiring, for example, is likely to follow the trajectory of theory fields (e.g., psychology, sociology), with 'coaching research' emerging as a by-product of the cognate discipline. Worse still, funding is likely to follow a 'performance' agenda; projects deemed to be deserving of funding being those unlikely to question the accepted order of things (the definitional core of 'sports coaching'), unable to critically question neoliberal policy, and more than likely serving to bolster elite performance. Further, few scholars have been able to establish a programmatic research line in coaching [21], leaving the vast majority of sport coaching research at its formative stage, limiting the development, and thus impact, as a critical field of research [22]. As such, and as with many other fields of inquiry, the producers of sports coaching research typically publish their results in scientific journals written for a small audience of other scientists with little or no consideration of applying 'findings' to coach education, the practice of coaching, or coaching practitioners. Resultantly, we are left with a rather staid, static and unquestioning ontological base, one that offers little challenge to the definitional core of 'sports coaching research', and, that offers little in terms of rethinking the field as a plurality of (often competing) approaches and perspectives, and through which we can imagine the field as socially and culturally responsive, communitarian, and justice oriented.

DISCIPLINARY PAROCHIALISM AND DOMINANCE

This rather limited (and we are sure, controversial) state of affairs exists despite the innovative and progressive work of those 'avant-garde' scholars who continue to push away

at the taken for granted ‘standards’ of sports coaching research. Trudel [23] identifies a range of academics who have managed to undertake and disseminate research in the theme field of sport coaching research (Gould and his colleagues [Dieffenbach; Moffett; Guinan; Greenleaf; Chung]; Salmela and colleagues [Bloom; Schinke; Durand-Bush]). In the United Kingdom, consideration has to be given to the work of Lyle, Jones and colleagues [Armour; Potrac; Purdy; Cassidy], as well as Jowett and colleagues [Cockerill; Cramer; Lorimer; Frost]. Furthermore, in France, the work of Arripe-Longueville and colleagues [Fournier; Dubois], and the study of Saury and Durand [24] are often referenced. However, and in spite of their contributions and advances, and although scholars from different fields have contributed to coaching research, there has been little progress towards working together and combining the different perspectives brought to bear on the field. As such, we are a long distance from an holistic understanding of the coaching process, a fuller understanding of its complexity [22, 25], let alone the potentialities as a discipline oriented towards social justice, communitarianism, and pressing social issues of our time. Further, and in this regard, the field is defined by a limited number of scholars—‘the elders’ [26] or ‘the gatekeepers of Good Science’ [27]—who control the “invisible networks of prestige” [26, p. 426], determining what research is accepted for publication in professional journals and ultimately prescribing what is the knowledge base for the theory field of sport coaching. To invoke and paraphrase Kincheloe [28], scholarly activity in sports coaching thus operates in a power-saturated and regulatory manner, with disciplinarians having developed a methodical, persistent, and well co-ordinated process of knowledge production. Yet, a healthy field is surely one defined as much by difference as similarity; as such, the vitality of sports coaching research should be ‘measured’ as much by challenge and contestation than it is by acquiescence to such invisible machinations of power. In this regard, sports coaching cannot be a field in which the most powerful patrons are allowed to “play the incommensurability card by constituting those who do not agree with their ‘paradigm’ as, at best, marginal—not people like us—or, at worst, belonging to a dangerously separate or lunatic fringe” [29, p. 435]. Thus, and although these disciplinarians have exhibited genius within these domains and great triumphs of scholarly breakthrough that have resulted in improvements in the knowledge base of sports coaching, the balance of this article is centred on furthering these positive contributions while avoiding the disciplinary parochialism and domination that limits the study in the ‘field’.

THE PHYSICAL PEDAGOGIC BRICOLAGE

We begin this section through recourse to the concept of the bricolage. The term is derived from Claude Levi-Strauss’ [30] discussion of it in *The Savage Mind*. Levi-Strauss deployed the French word *bricoleur*, which describes a handyman or handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task [31, 32]. *Bricolage*, as a concept, has been deployed to help in thinking through the social transformation necessary for seeking a better understanding of both the worldviews of diverse peoples and the forces of domination affecting individuals [33]. Despite the denigration of bricolage by those in the academic community that see interdisciplinarity by nature as superficial, madness, knowing nothing well and misguided [34–36], bricolage holds profound implications for critical research through the notion of a critical ontology [37]:

Bricoleurs maintain that this object of enquiry [the event] is ontologically complex in that it can’t be described as an encapsulated entity. In this more open view, the object of inquiry is always part of many contexts and processes; it is culturally

inscribed and historically situated. The complex view of the object of inquiry accounts for the historical efforts to interpret its meanings in the world and how such efforts continue to define its social, cultural, political, psychological, and educational effects [33, p. 319].

In essence, opening the field of sports coaching research to the bricolage, among other intellectual pursuits, requires a move towards deep interdisciplinarity [28]; a step that would allow for multiple ways of seeing, doing, and, acting. It requires thinking through, as we have sketched above, the social construction of the discipline's knowledge bases, epistemologies, and knowledge production methodologies. It requires a genealogical approach that facilitates the exploration of the "discipline as a discursive system of regulatory power with its propensity to impound knowledge within arbitrary and exclusive boundaries" [28, p. 684]. So, what precisely does this mean for how we conceptualise the ontological core of sports coaching research?

THEORETICAL ECLECTICISM

In the first instance, bricolage requires eschewing any pretence of disciplinarity; accepting the conventions of a particular discipline as a natural way of producing knowledge and viewing a particular aspect of the world. Indeed, as Kincheloe [28] points out, the traditional disciplines of our current moment are far from fixed, uniform and monolithic and it is not uncommon for us to report that we have more in common with others in different fields of study. We live in a scholarly world with faded disciplinary boundary lines and our research work involves opening up elastic conversations and analytical frames among, across, and outside of, established disciplines. Currently, scholarly activity in the field of 'sports coaching' can be seen to be underpinned by four approaches [38]: psychological, sociological, modelling, and pedagogical. Yet, if we were to embrace the *bricolage*, we could imagine psychology, sociology and pedagogy supplemented by the academic disciplines of history, philosophy, religion, languages and linguistics, literature, visual arts, applied arts, performing arts, anthropology, area studies, economics, education, ethnic studies, gender and sexuality studies, geography, political science, social work, systems science, health science, journalism, media and communication, and law (although this list is by no means exclusive or exhaustive). Adding to the theoretical eclecticism of the bricolage, each of these academic disciplines include multiple subdisciplinary areas—for example: cultural history, cultural anthropology, Black studies, political history, public finance, child welfare, social policy, cultural geography, complexity theory, media studies, and sports law—would further explicate the context and therefore the understanding of the coaching 'moment' or 'event'. Indeed, we would argue it is incumbent on the researcher to remember that the bricolage is a way of naming and organising existing impulses that influence the understanding of the contextual practices of 'sports coaching' [*sic*]. Reworking Kincheloe [39], such an approach would serve to promote understanding, communication, and, create structures that allow for a better informed, more rigorous, mode of knowledge production which has the power to move the field of sports coaching in a more progressive direction.

DEEP INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Importantly, using isolated disciplines/subdisciplines does not make for an integrated academic area; a collection of cross-disciplinary areas that simply coexist together does not constitute intellectual integration [40]. What is needed is the deep interdisciplinarity of the bricolage. Developing Denzin and Lincoln's [31] use of the research bricolage, Kincheloe's

[28] bricolage transcends reductionism, understands the complexity of the research task, and, is concerned with multiple methods of inquiry and with diverse theoretical and philosophical notions of the various elements encountered in the research act. This approach is able to surpass the limitations of a single method, the discursive strictures of one disciplinary approach, that which is missed by traditional practices of validation, the historicity of certified modes of knowledge production, the inseparability of the knower and the known, and the complexity and heterogeneity of all human forms [28]. In order to attempt to achieve this, to overcome “hyperfragmentation” and “hyperspecialization” [41, p. 46], we argue for interdisciplinarity and intellectual integration. Thus, drawing on the work of Andrews [41] and reworking Gill [40, p. 275], the reconceptualised ontological core of sports coaching, at least in one iteration, should be:

... multi-disciplinary, drawing from many multiple disciplinary areas (e.g., biology, psychology, sociology), and including multiple subdisciplinary areas (e.g., biomechanics, sport history, exercise physiology). Isolated multiple subdisciplines do not make for an integrated academic area, and a collection of cross-disciplinary areas that simply live together does not constitute an integrated...discipline. Interdisciplinary implies actual connections among subareas, and an interdisciplinary [field] that integrates subdisciplinary knowledge is essential.

Intellectual integration – around the central thematic of sports coaching, of areas of study with common epistemological and ontological bases– is, “therefore, a necessary first step to creating a more comprehensive and integrative [sports coaching], one that does not hide behind the inadequacies and derelictions of its current iteration” [41, p. 47].

Somewhat modifying Kincheloe [28] then, we suggest that sports coaching research requires an array of interdisciplinary bricoleurs to operate in a coaching landscape where certainty and stability have long departed for parts unknown. It is these bricoleurs who must recognise, among other issues, that research is socially constructed. We require practices that are interdisciplinary, transgressive, and oppositional, but connected to a broader notion of cultural politics designed to further a multiracial, economic and political democracy; a project that connects theory to social change, textual analysis to practical politics, and academic inquiry to public spheres [1].

BEYOND THE NEOLIBERAL, CORPORATE ORDER

Sports coaching researchers also need to provide accounts that are openly incomplete, partisan and insist on the political dimensions of knowledge [42]. Of course, these are practices that violate academic neutrality, politicise the educational process and contaminate the virtues of academic civility [43]. Yet if we, as a field, are to make difference in the world (as opposed to simply reflecting the conjunctural moment of which it is a part), then there is a need for action and to articulate the political goals (of the researcher and the field), be practice oriented, applied, and address the relationship between academia and non-academia (and here we are borrowing from Bourdieu [44] that revolutionized the manner in which praxis, practice and interaction were defined in anthropology). Rather than purely represent the present order of things, working as unquestioning puppeteers for a neoliberal, corporate order, we need to interrogate, debate, and deliberate, we need to make visible and challenge the grotesque inequalities and intolerable oppression of the present moment [43]. As socially responsible scholars we will need to operate across, between and beyond approaches to the empirical and face new challenges and oppositions in “representing responsibility” [45, p.

108] in transforming public consciousness and common sense about the sporting empirical. Boundaries need to be crossed, taken-for-granted work routines questioned, and new environments and outlets investigated.

TRANSFORMATIVE PRAXIS AND POWER RELATIONS

If then, there is no longer any pretence to epistemological orthodoxy [29], we can begin to sketch the pathways for sports coaching research to move towards a field of study that is interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and counterdisciplinary in nature [33]. This would allow for an ever-evolving criticality in the sports coaching research that is devoid of discrete schools of analysis. Building on an understanding of sports coaching research that can be located “in a transformative praxis that leads to the alleviation of suffering and the overcoming of oppression” [33, p. 321], we envision the sports coaching researcher as one who operates not as “an anonymous functionary or careful bureaucrat” [46, p. 13]; rather, as one who can make a difference and even take sides (cf. [47-49]) and contribute to an intellectual life that has the possibilities of dissent against the status quo. We need to reconceptualise the ontological core of the field around a sensibility that assumes that “societies are fundamentally divided along hierarchically ordered lines of differentiation (i.e., those based on class, ethnic, gender, ability, generational, national, racial, and/or sexual norms), as realised through the *operations of power* and *power relations* within the social formation” [41, p. 57, italics added]. This is a sports coaching research horizon driven by the need to understand the complexities, experiences, and injustices that coaches, athletes, children, parents, physiotherapists, social workers, medical staff, and the many other constituents of the field, face on a daily basis. Further, these are researchers who, when confronting such issues, should not be afraid to tackle them head on. That is, as a field, we need to be motivated by a “commitment to progressive social change” [50, p. 1], with an explicit aim to produce the type of knowledge “through which [we are] in a position to intervene into the broader social world and *make a difference*” [41, p. 57]. In some respects, following Giroux [43], at the core of the sports coaching bricolage, is a *performative pedagogy* that locates the importance of understanding theory as the basis for “intervening into contexts and power...in order to enable people to act more strategically in ways that may change their context for the better” [51, p. 143].

FROM SPORT TO PHYSICAL CULTURE

Although the borders or boundaries of a reconceptualised ‘field’ of sports coaching research are going to be fluid and malleable, it is of fundamental importance to identify the sites of critical engagement if the intellectual project is to achieve its emancipatory, intellectual, political, and, moral ends. *Sport* is a vague and imprecise noun [41], and to alleviate criticism of the conceptual weakness presented by this signifier; it seems prudent to embrace the evolution of sport to physical culture [52] (cf. [41, 53, 54]). The broader domain of physical culture encompasses various dimensions of physicality – including, but not restricted to sport, exercise, fitness, dance, wellness, health, movement practices, ‘activities of daily living’, recreation, and work. Each of these ‘spheres’ incorporates different motivations for, and practices of, organising and regulating human movement and for each of them the *active body* is something that can be experienced (by the instrumental subject) or observed (as a representational object) [41].

To invoke and paraphrase Silk and Andrews [54], there is a need for the reconceptualised field to embrace the conceptual underpinnings that understand a physicality focused on bodily movement and activity. Drawing on Ingham [52] and Andrews and colleagues [41, 53,

54], we mobilise the nomenclature ‘physical’ as it more accurately portrays the various dimensions of physicality that congeal to form the complex and diverse cultural space for inquiry. Further, the term ‘pedagogic’ more fully explicates the organising and regulating of the teaching, learning, education and instructional approach undertaken in the cultural space. What is proposed then is for the reconceptualised field to replace the limiting and misleading designated moniker, ‘sports coaching’; instead, and perhaps more accurately, ascribing to parameters of what we term the ‘Physical Pedagogic Bricolage’ (PPB). The immediate impact of ascribing PPB to the field is that it opens up the reconceptualised field to spheres of inquiry that might have been discarded or not seen as relevant by practitioners under ‘sports coaching’ research. One of the many implications of such a shift is the need to move beyond the intimation that the ontological core of research field is based around improving the sporting *performance* of others [38]. This misnomer has characterised the field since its conception, pace the work of Kidman and Hanrahan [55, p. 145, italics added] who suggest that “one of the primary roles of a coach is to help athletes improve their *performance*”, or Borrie and Knowles [56] who refer to the process of coaching as helping a player/athlete learn and improve a particular skill. Rather, our conception of PPB is one that encompasses broader spheres of enquiry that have traditionally been discarded by the ‘field’, the very essence of PPB—with its multiple iterations of experiencing, communicating, instructing, teaching, and learning—necessitates a radical reconceptualisation of ‘performance’ as we understand it.

SHIFTING THE BOUNDARIES

Within the sphere of PPB, might we not expect the ‘coach’ to engage older populations in various forms of physical activity to, say, tackle obesity? Might, the practitioner attempt to illuminate the under-representation of particular ethnic identities in recreational programmes? Should we not expect those engaged in the lives of children to explicate the broader societal benefits (e.g., crime reduction) of engaging youth in regular exercise regimes, among many others? Should we not attempt to understand the everyday lives of coaches (and perhaps, athletes) and the multiple identities they inhabit? Should our voices of critique not get louder and louder [57] against the marginalisation of academic programmes in ‘sport coaching’ within the corporatised university, or, perhaps against the conformity of such programmes towards governmental agendas (something we accept is extremely difficult in our present moment)? Why do we not explore, within, and against, our present institutional constraints, the potential collaborations and potentialities with ‘colleagues’ in health, social policy, management and other yet unimagined allegiances? Or, should we not be ‘crossing borders’ [43], forging allegiances with artists, activists, architects, and, yes, even our esteemed colleagues in sports science, as we continue to shape a meaningful PPB that is responsive to, and formative of, our present social order? No matter our preference or our academic motivation, this is PPB that excavates and theorises this, articulating an ontologically complex project grounded in a moral-sacred epistemology that places moral order and ethics as a central concern of the research process [1, 49, 58, 59].

EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Far from the methodological fundamentalism and insanity surrounding gold standard, evidence-based research (see [9, 11, 27, 60-62]), PPB is open to a plurality of approaches to garnering knowledge. Although this is worthy of article-length consideration in and of itself (something we are currently working on), following Johnson et al. [63], this will be dependent on who we are (our own forms of partiality and positionality), the process of

questioning (what we want to know) and our relationship to our participants (who we wish to dialogue with, the differences and similarities of our situations). However, and no matter what strategies we deploy, physical pedagogic bricoleurs will likely have to negotiate the I-thou dialogue. That is, there exists a continuum of methodological strategies ranging from textual analysis through full-scale autobiographies, from oral history to interview-based methods, from ethnography to auto-ethnography, all of which involve recognition of the nature of differences and forms of power that circle around the self and other [63]. Our approaches then are dialogic, they involve dialogue “between the researching self and sources of different kinds”; but, dialogue is also internal, it happens “within the researcher” as we revise, critique and reformulate our understandings [63, p. 77]. That we hover between self and other, between text and self, and between interpretation and self, and maintain an ‘in-betweenness’ [63] throughout the research process is perhaps a necessary consequence, if not feature, of our self-reflexive dialogic methodologies.

While all of our research is necessarily dialogic in type, certain methodological approaches, ground within a sacred-moral epistemology, are perhaps better suited to dealing with the type of pressing social issues we are likely to encounter in a reconceptualised PPB. Following Abu-Lughod [64], no longer can our field hide behind a false border between the self and other. It appears prudent for sport coaching researchers to recognise this gap, revealing both parties as vulnerable, experiencing subjects working to coproduce knowledge. In this sense, this is a PPB “on location” [65, p. 782], a space in which to use personal stories to create calculated disturbances in social, cultural and political networks of power. Such critical, self-reflexive scholarship, runs throughout all strategies of inquiry, asking of us that we hold self and culture together, that we critique the situatedness of self with others in social contexts.

ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN

Undoubtedly, in seeking to avoid the reductionistic, monological, one-dimensional knowledge that results from external impositions of disciplinary boundaries [39], we are opening ourselves up to a range of approaches to writing and other forms of expression. For sure, and somewhat influenced by Clifford and Marcus [66], Denzin and Lincoln [31] and the work of Andrews Sparkes [67-69] and colleagues [70-72], sports coaching research—in its more traditional formulation—has begun to “break away from the conventions of social science inscription to experiment with polyvocality, poetry, pastiche, performance, and more” [73, p. 14] through exploration of new territories of expression (see Purdy et al. [74, 75] ; Jones [76, 77]). However, and all too often, this form of expression is seen, at best as marginal, peripheral, and in poor relation to ‘scientific counterparts’; while at worst, it is seen as superficial, journalistic musings that do not conform to scientific rigour. As such, what we vehemently argue, is that such forms of expression / inquiry sit, however unhappily, alongside that which ‘counts’ as knowledge in the reconceptualised ontological core of the PPB. However, our call for a PBB does not suggest discarding that which currently holds the centre. Reconceptualising the ‘field’ around a PPB seeks to *displace*, *decentre*, and, *disrupt* the established field of research and result in an environment where *anything can happen*. In this sense we are calling for competing ontological, epistemological and political positions exist alongside one another to foster multi-methodological approaches to truly aid us in expanding our intellectual horizons. However, it is important to emphasise that the PPB ‘nirvana’ where *anything can happen* is not to be confused with an environment in which *anything goes* [47]. There remains an essential requirement to evaluate the quality of research that embraces PPB, to ensure ‘interpretive sufficiency’ [49] and “high and difficult

standards” [78, p. 254]. While beyond the remit of this paper, such criteria to which nonfoundational [79] (cf. [47]) scholarly activity should be accountable are: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impact, expresses a reality, and reciprocity [49, 58, 65, 78, 80].

CRITICAL DIALOGUE AND INTELLECTUAL INTEGRATION

This directional purview for the ‘field’ is concerned with the progressive potential of a ‘field in tension’ in which an evolving critical dialogue surrounding ontology, epistemology, methodology, interpretation, expression, and impact can be held. This article has been presented with respect for the competing, alternative traditions that it raises a challenge to, as, and here we are borrowing from Floden and Buchmann [81, p. 57], “good ideas and practices are too scarce in any domain to dismiss any of them lightly”. There are those who will denounce us for our polemical excesses, but we are faced with the very survival of a socio-cultural discourse within science-dominated departments. Whether we choose to realise it or not, it is the context in which sports coaching research has been, and is being, disciplined and institutionalised that has had the most profound impact on the nature of the field.

Universities have actively positioned themselves within the context of the new economy – a process termed ‘academic capitalism’ [16]; the resultant hyper-professionalism of academics is such that specialised knowledge in the service of funding ‘niches’ encapsulates academic life in which we are less likely to harness greater individual responsibility and greater autonomy and more likely to face a reduction in social responsibility [13]. Embracing a reconceptualised ontological core of the field, would mean viewing Said’s [46] call for ‘amateurism in intellectual life’ sympathetically. The PPB would become characterised by intellectual integration from dialogue *between* academics from the myriad of inter-disciplinary areas, the engagement of academics with the multiple iterations of the individual actors involved in the praxis of the PPB and through crossing borders to ensure engagement at an institutional/organisational level. Indeed, embracing the PPB would displace the notion of the ‘universal intellectual’ or the ‘specific intellectual’, instead fostering Giroux’s [82] notion of the ‘border intellectual’; one who is not constrained by paradigms and disciplinary boundaries. To this, the deployment of the concept of bricolage [31] signifies the multidisciplinary, interdisciplinarity and intellectual integration necessary for scholarly activity in the reconceptualised field of PPB.

CONCLUSION

The PPB scholar may face difficulty with publication, tenure, funding, and even ridicule from disciplinarians in regard to superficiality, especially when asked to transcend, facilitate and cultivate, at times as yet unimagined, boundary work. As such, the PPB should perhaps be discarded at this point if you are in any way faint of heart; the comfortable, the institutionally secure, the graduate student, those who chip away at critical cultural analysis of sport within ‘science’ dominated Departments [54]. For embracing the reconceptualised ontological core of the PPB:

...may very well require destabilising self-reflexivity, having conversations with yet to be imagined parties, stepping outside the halls of academe, and, a leaving behind of all that is academically agreeable. It will likely require admitting—for we are not sure that no matter how far our heads may be planted in the sand that we hold on to the sanctity of the University as a place of learning and discovery, if, that is, they ever were—that the institutions we inhabit ... are *political* and *corporate*

entities that restrict our scholastic horizons. [54, pp. 32-33; italics added].

Yet, and no matter what questions we are asked to face, no matter the castigation of such an approach by those secure and established in the field, or, indeed, those (individuals and institutions) who perhaps profit from the status quo, there has perhaps never been a more apt moment for critical social scientific work that is not only sympathetic to, but embraces an intellectual, political, moral, and emancipatory project. In embracing such a sensibility, we argue for a reconceptualised field of inquiry that moves beyond the limiting and misleading mythopoeic status given to the terms of 'sport' and 'coaching' and embraces the various instances of the pedagogic approaches to physical activity. Practitioners in this new field – the *physical pedagogic bricoleurs* – through critical interrogations into the physical that are grounded in a 'moral sacred epistemology' [49], must ensure that the performative and utopian impulses to produce research that confronts inequality, places moral order, ethics, and social transformation as central concerns [43, 54]. In seeking a better understanding of both the world-views of diverse peoples and the forces of domination affecting individuals, this 'radically contextualist' PPB must be *meaningful* to a range of communities, and *make a difference* [33, 41, 50, 54, 83]. Reworking Silk and Andrews [54], what is proposed is an approach that challenges the practices imposed under neoliberal ideology (and indeed better understands the place of coaching therein), one that is characterised by a multiperspectival process and a socially and culturally responsive, communitarian, justice-oriented agenda. In essence, the PPB is an approach that can 'do coaching justice'.

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